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# US steps up bid to fend off war in Persian Gulf

## Officials meet at White House

By William Beecher  
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WASHINGTON - The United States pressed diplomatic efforts yesterday to try to halt the cycle of violence in the Persian Gulf in hopes that an expanded war could be avoided.

President Ronald Reagan chaired a White House meeting on the crisis in which senior officials made clear the reluctance of oil producing states in the region to call for military reinforcement from the West, hoping instead that Iran and Iraq could be persuaded to stop attacking shipping in the waterway.

But American planners were studying a number of options, short of direct military intervention, if a call for limited assistance is made.

They include:

- Expanded coverage of the air space over the gulf through the use of Airborne Warning and Control Systems, or AWACS, planes. At present, four such planes flying in six-hour shifts from Saudi Arabia provide coverage of the northern gulf area. This could be extended, with additional aircraft, to the entire waterway.

- Expanded provision of US intelligence on Iranian activities to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman.

- Resubmission of a request to Congress to permit the sale of 1200 Stinger air defense missiles to Saudi Arabia. Two months ago, after King Hussein of Jordan criticized US Mideast policy, the Administration withdrew its Stinger



GLOBE MAP BY JANE SIMON

Map locates gulf area where  
Saudi tanker was hit Wednesday.

requests both for Jordan and for Saudi Arabia.

"The accent right now is on diplomacy," one official said, noting that the United States has appealed to Baghdad and Tehran to stop targeting tankers before the situation gets out of hand.

Officials said there has been no request for military reinforcement from any of the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, but the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States yesterday sought assurances that if its planes get involved in future dogfights with Iranian aircraft while protecting tanker traffic, the United States will be diplomatically supportive.

After an emergency meeting of the council in Riyadh yesterday, foreign ministers of the six nations said they would bring Iran's attacks outside the war zone to the attention of the United Nation's Security Council as well as to a meeting of the Arab League.